

X¹⁹⁴
756 relations with the priests of the Abyssinian Coptic church; e.g. by whispering to her when to give them private feasts, and how to guide observant Amhara clients - married couples in domestic strife - so as not to come into conflict with the "mäñfäs gubä" (lit. soul father, confessor, who would normally arbitrate such a case for the church).

Another of her powerful zars teaches her medicine, and specializes in the diagnosis of difficult cases of possession. Still another is a specialist on what the other zars prefer as sacrifices, taboos, poetry, and how to negotiate with each of them; (i.e. he teaches her how to function like a priestess).

Another of her zars specializes in business advice: when to buy and sell what; when and how to invest in caravans, or invest in construction of town houses. Occasionally she also takes incidental advice from low-status spirits such as Shanqit, who gives her moner hints on how to be a good hostess when entertaining a "telleg säw" (great man) who comes to her in secret; and on how to manage her large household.

Lady Sälämtu's posture, when not undergoing possession herself, is one of benign self-assurance, not unlike the calm, almost phlegmatic composure of Amhara nobles who act as if everything must come to them. For Lady Salamtew appears sincere and certain of being able to draw on her private reservoir of protective zar spirits almost any night she chooses.

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115 The writer's negotiations with her were conducted through his guide, himself a native of the Addis Alām section of Gondar, and who, though young, occupied some status as "educated" (seven grades of modern elementary school). Moreover, he was not unknown to Lady Salamtew, for his father, a well-known "wogäsha" doctor in Gondar, had often referred

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[112] patients to her when his organic medicines had not helped. It was this guide who hit on the idea of flattering Lady Salāntew by notifying her that the foreigner was sick, suffering from severe headaches, sleeplessness and chronic intestinal cramps - (all common ailments in her practice), and that he would trust only her for treatment. Whether or not Lady Salāntew believed this, it indicated to her that the foreigner would fit himself into the framework and procedures of her sar cult, and not become a disturbing element that might "offend" her sar spirits.

The guide had taken the further precaution of negotiating with her through her brothers, who were willing to encourage her to accept, in the hope of gifts and rewards. As a result, Lady Salāntew accepted in principle; but in line with the unhurried dignity of her position she had the foreigner informed that he should see the guide again at a later time when she would make known the conditions under which he might attend the "amat bal" convention. In appreciation for having reached this point in the negotiation, the guide left her brothers with some "etan gānzāb" (money for frankincense).

The next step was reached when Lady Salāntew expressed the wish to have the foreigner appear before her, some days before the convention, so that she could look him over.

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[342] Her house, a semimodern affair of hard-mud walls, is reached by a steep downhill trail from the Gondar town market. On the lower level (the old section of Gondar called "Addis Alan") many houses and huts are built on the foundations of stone houses destroyed by the dervishes in the late 19th century. This section, once restricted to Muslim and other non-Coptic minorities, is now largely inhabited by Muslim Ethiopian weavers and retail traders, many ex-slaves of Sudanese or part-Shanqalla

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11. The letter was made available to the author through the courtesy of an Ethiopian informant. The text paraphrases Psalm 79. 809
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12. This and the following section draw in part on material which has been published elsewhere, together with other material on Manz not included here. Cf. D. Levine, "On the History and Culture of Manz," *Journal of Semitic Studies*, IX (Spring 1964), 204-11. [22]
[13]
13. The boundaries of Manz proper include the Mofar River in the south, the Adabāy and Wānchet rivers in the west, the Qeçhenē River in the north, and in the east a long chain of mountains which pour forth the waters that drain across Manz and which divide it from the lowlands of Efrātā, Gedem, and Qawat. Accurate maps of Manz and its boundaries are not yet available.
14. Their itineraries are described in Isenberg and Krapf, *Journals* (London, 1843); and Paul Soleillet, *Voyages en Éthiopie* (Rouen, 1886). 113
15. A. Caquot, "L'homélie en l'honneur de l'archange Raguel," *Annales d'Éthiopie*, II (1957), 91-122.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 113.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 114.
18. Takla Ṭṣādeq Makuriyā, *Ya-Itopyā Tāriḵ Ka-Aṭṣē Lebna Dengel Eska Aṭṣē Tēwodros* (Addis Ababa: Tensā'ē Za-Gubā'ē Press, 1949 E.C.), p. 20.
19. Cerulli, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-3.
20. Dorse, *op. cit.*, p. 165.
21. Chahab ad-Din Ahmad, *Futuh el-Habacha*, trans. D'Abbadie and Paulitschke (Paris, 1898), p. 342.
22. Cf. D. Levine, "On the History and Culture of Manz," *op. cit.*, p. 208.
23. This account of Nagāssi, like the accounts of his descendants which follow, has been constructed from a variety of sources, which, while differing in details, agree on the essential points presented here unless otherwise indicated. Oral traditions were obtained from Amhara informants in Manz and Addis Ababa. The chief written sources consulted include: Heruy Walda Selassie, an unpublished and untitled manuscript on the history of Ethiopia (part of which was published in his *Wā-Zēmā* [Addis Ababa, 1923 E.C.]); Takla Ṭṣādeq Makuriyā, *op. cit.*; Tādassa Za-Waldē, *Ya-Abētohun Yā'qob Teweldennā Acher Tāriḵ* (Addis Ababa: Berhānennā Salām Press, 1948 E.C.); Guḡbrē Sellassiē, *Chronique du Règne de Ménéliḵ II* (2 vols.; Paris: Librairie Orientale et Américaine, 1930-32); Antonio Cecchi, *Da Zeila alle frontiere del Caffa* (3 vols.; Rome, 1886-87); Major W. C. Harris, *The Highlands of Ethiopia* (3 vols.; 2d ed.; London, 1844); Isenberg and Krapf, *op. cit.*; and Soleillet, *op. cit.* [173]
[15]
24. The related claim set forth by his dynasty—that Nagāssi was in the direct line of descent from Lebna Dengel—is less universally acknowledged by Ethiopians. It is still a controversial question whether or not Nagāssi was actually related to Lebna Dengel and, if so, by what route. 193
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The official genealogy traces the descent line as follows: Lebna Dengel—Yā'qob—Segew Qāl—Warada Qāl—Lebsa Qāl—Nagāssi. This is the account set forth in Takla Ṭṣādeq Makuriyā's history. The other Shoan authors who